

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
Alexandria Division**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

MOHAMAD JAMAL KHWEIS,

Defendant.

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Criminal No. 1:16CR143

DEFENDANT’S POSITION ON SENTENCING – EXHIBIT A

Letter from Mohamad Khweis

Dear Judge O'Grady,

On June 7 2017, I was convicted on terrorism related charges and a gun charge. The worst thing that happened to me and my family. I never thought in a million years I would ever get charged with terrorism related charges and a gun charge. I am still in shock til this very day and disappointed in myself for this life changing event. I pace back and forth in my cell in my cell in regret. I tell myself everyday throughout the day that I wish I never traveled to a place I never should have gone. I ruined my life and my family's life. I disappointed my family and I feel terribly sorry for doing so.

My family came here to the best country in the world to raise a family and to make sure their children have a great life and live that American dream. Ever since I was a baby my parents worked hard to make sure we have everything we need. When I was a child my parents worked long hours they had to get a baby-sitter whose a great family friend, an Arab Christian from Lebanon to take me to my bus stop in the morning and pick me up after school and take care of me until my mom and dad came home.

My parents always told my brother and I they work long hours to make sure we have the best lives and a good future. They tell us how it's important to get a good education so we can have a good career and a great future. My parents told me to be like my close relatives who were doctors, lawyers, and police officers. Instead of making my family proud of me I brought my family shame and humiliation.

Ever since I was young I wanted to make my family happy and proud of me. I started working at an early age. I remember having to go to my school to get a worker's permit in order to work because I was under the age of 16. I gave my parents my very first paycheck. My parents always taught me to respect my elders so in high school I worked at a senior citizen's home. I also often volunteered for community work and community events which made my family very proud.

When I arrived in Syria reality hit me. I couldn't believe what I had done and where I was at. I hated myself for making the worst decision I ever made in my life. During my escape my vision constantly became blurry due to tears building up. I wanted to scream due to regret but was afraid of being heard.

After my escape I was so happy to see the FBI agents and I am really sorry I was not completely truthful at first.

During my time in Alexandria Detention Center surrounded by institutionalized career criminals, everyday I live in regret wishing I could turn back time and made better decisions. During my stay at the Alexandria jail. I had plenty of time to think about my actions and what I put myself and my family through.

I had voluntarily signed up and taken many beneficial programs at the Alexandria Detention Center to improve and better myself as an individual which includes making better decisions. During my time here I even took a couple college courses which made my parents happy. I also took various religious services such as church and Catholic mass and had the pleasure to talk to several pastors and priests and asked for their blessings.

I wish I can put all this behind me and do something I love and make my family proud of me again. I deeply regret the decisions I made and assure you that I definitely learned my lesson and I ask for your

mercy on the day of sentencing

Sincerely,

M. Klein